



Benjamin Franklin—"Father of American Diplomacy"

AMERICA has never produced a greater statesman than Franklin, who was revered by the people second only to Washington. He was a signer of both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, and his wisdom made the latter a possibility. The great Lord Chatham pronounced him not only an honor to the Anglo-Saxon people, but to human nature. In every capital of Europe he was a welcome guest, and he it was who induced France to lend us ships, men and money during the darkest days of the Revolution. Upon his death Congress ordered a general mourning for three days. So long as Americans treasure the Republic and Personal Liberty as the noblest of all human blessings, the fame of Franklin can never perish. Personally he was possessed of robust health; he was a well-shaped man, of a wise but merry nature; he had the head of a Greek philosopher, while his grace, his noble bearing and winning personality made him a conspicuous figure in any assemblage of great men. He was a moderate user all his lifetime of Old Madeira and barley-malt beer. It is safe to say that he toasted the New Republic with every great man of Europe and America. Franklin considered his work in building the Constitution his greatest service to posterity. Upon the self-evident declaration of the Constitution of the United States Anheuser-Busch 50 years ago launched their gigantic institution. To-day, wherever Americans go for health, or business, or pleasure, their famed brand BUDWEISER is there. Its popularity, due to its quality, purity, mildness and exquisite flavor, has daily grown in public favor until 7500 people are constantly employed to keep pace with the ever-increasing demand. When in St. Louis visit the home of BUDWEISER.

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CHAPTER XLIII.

Ralph accompanied his fellow-magistrates into the small room. It was only dimly lit, and he got out of the light as much as possible and stood with his back to the wall. He knew the date of his father's marriage to his mother well enough, and so longer Earl of Ratton, but a nobody and nameless; and he expected that the men around him would turn their backs upon him.

But it scarcely need be said that he was wrong. They were gentlemen, and gentlemen stand by a man when he is down, especially when he falls through no fault of his own.

So, to his surprise, they gathered round him, eager to express their sympathy, and to offer encouragement, and, if need be, consolation.

Lord Hatherley was the first to speak. He had mastered his agitation, and, though grave enough, spoke easily, and with a faint smile.

"This case abounds in surprises, Ralph," he said. "I imagine this is one we need not count as serious."

"No, no!" said Lord Parodel, laying his hand on Ralph's shoulder. "Too much like a play at a theatre, eh, Ratton? Don't you upset yourself, don't you worry; you'll find that there's nothing in it."

"Of course not," echoed the young duke, nodding at Ralph cheerfully. "People are always disputing one's title nowadays, and laying claim to one's estate; but it never comes to much, does it?"

"My opinion is that it's either a forgery or a piece of delirious raving on the part of the poor woman. Been wrecked, you know, and lost her reason. See?" said another.

Ralph looked round with a sickly smile. Most men would have been

grateful for their kindly consideration; but Ralph was incapable of gratitude; it is a plant that only grows on gracious soils.

"Oh, it's all right, thanks," he drawled. "I'm not afraid. It's a forgery, I daresay; and I suppose it will give me some trouble; but I shall fight the claim, and win, in the end, I've no doubt."

"Of course, of course!" was the chorus of assent.

Ralph passed his hand over his clammy forehead, and smiled again, and Lord Hatherley drew him out of the room.

"The carriage is waiting, Ralph; and if you are half as tired as I am, you will be glad to get home."

As they made their way through the crowd which still hung about the court house, Ralph saw Workley standing talking to Green.

Ralph made a sign to him, and Workley, scarcely turning his head, nodded sullenly.

"This is a troublesome business, Ralph," said Lord Hatherley, as they were driven through the mob. "Of course the dates are wrong, and—"

"Of course!" responded Ralph, defiantly. "The dates in the certificate have been altered—I mean that my mother was married before this woman, whoever she was. Do you think Bulpit would have recognized my claim, that he doesn't know his business?"

"Just so, just so! We must meet the claim boldly; and I've no doubt it will soon be disposed of. But what a romance! If that young girl should be your half-sister, Ralph!"

Ralph swore savagely.

"She's an impostor!" he exclaimed. "She is as bad as the scoundrel in the dock! It is all a plant, a conspiracy! But we will deal with her after we have dealt with him. He'll be committed to-morrow, and—"

He stopped, for his words had recalled the sense of his own peril which this sudden discovery had, strange to say, driven out. "You—you won't tell Mary?" he said in a low voice.

"Certainly not. I shall take care that she knows nothing whatever of

this awful business. She is ill enough as it is, poor girl!"

When they reached the Hall gates, Ralph stopped the carriage.

"I'll get out here," he said. "I'm tired, and shall be glad to be alone and quiet."

Lord Hatherley assented at once.

"Will you come round later—shall I come to you?" he asked, considerably; but Ralph shook his head.

"I think I'd rather be alone," he said.

He walked up the avenue with dragging step, for now that he was out of observation the fictitious courage waned quickly.

He fancied that the footman who opened the door, the butler who stood by, Parkins, who noiselessly hurried to meet him, displayed in their countenances their knowledge of his true position; and with a harsh, "Keep dinner till I ring," went straight to the den, and, of course, straight to the cellar.

What should he do? The question hammered at his hot brain as, half unconsciously, he drank glass after glass of brandy.

At one moment he had almost decided to take refuge in flight; the next, as the brandy mounted to his brain, and lent him its insidious warmth, he resolved to face the situation, and fight against the claimant, whoever he might be.

A knock at the window made him start and clutch at a chair for support; but he knew who to expect, and opening the window, let Workley in.

"You want to see me?" he said, scarcely raising his eyes to Ralph's face.

Ralph noticed the absence of "my lord," and gnawed at his lip.

"Yes. I know now why you black-mailed me. I want the truth, and you'd better tell me, for your own sake, Workley," he began.

Workley waved his hand, and leant against the sideboard, his eyes fixed on the floor.

"There is no need for threats," he said in a hollow, weary voice. "You know the truth now. I was present at your father's marriage."

"The—the one—"

"The one in London—yes. And strange to say, I saw him a week after his other marriage—to your mother—in Melbourne. He was on a spree, and in a fit of the blues he told me what he had done. It was bigamy, right enough."

"Then—then—my mother—I—"

"You were born a year before her marriage," said Workley, with a callous indifference which intensified Ralph's agony of impotent fury. "You are, therefore, illegitimate—"

"I am not the earl—not—not—"

"Certainly not."

"Curse—" broke from Ralph's white lips; but Workley stopped him with a gesture.

"Your own father! But please yourself. What do you want with me?"

Ralph paced up and down.

"What—what am I to do?" he asked, hoarsely.

Workley shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know. See here, my lord—that is—ah, well! It doesn't matter—I've too much on my mind to interest myself in your affairs. I've been hit badly—" His voice grew husky. "The woman I loved—" He could not go on for a moment or two. "I've only one thing to live for—to see the man who did it, swing."

Ralph started, and eyed him sideways.

"There's no doubt of that scoundrel's guilt," he said. "The evidence—"

"Yes," broke in Workley, savagely; "but the court's with him! I can see it! Don't tell me! I can see it!"

Ralph nodded.

"Yes; perhaps it is. But I'm not. I'll stand out for his committal if—if you'll keep by me in this fix."

"What can I do?" asked Workley.

"Say that—the thing's a forgery—that the marriage took place a month later—"

Workley shook his head.

"No use. There's the registry in London."

Ralph groaned, and wiped the sweat from his brow.

"What—what do you advise? Help me, Workley! I've no one but you."

Workley looked at him with scarcely veiled contempt.

"Show fight," he said; "show fight as long as you can, and while the struggle's going on, get as much money together as you can, and"—he nodded significantly—"that is what I should do. What else is there?"

Ralph made a gesture of impatience.

"To lose all!" he whined. "I'll give you some money."

Workley mixed himself a glass of brandy and water.

"Your loss is nothing compared with mine," he said, brokenly. "My life's finished with. It—it was for her that I wanted that farm. Now I want nothing but my revenge. And I'll have that!"

His hand clenched on the glass as it struck his sharp-closed teeth.

Ralph shuddered as Workley moved to the window.

"Wait! Who—who is the heir?—but you won't know. I must see Bulpit—Bulpit will help me for his own sake."

Workley shrugged his shoulders again and opened the window.

"All the Bulpits in the world can't help you to keep the title; and the money belongs to that young lady your father's lawful daughter," he said. "Take my advice and—make hay while the sun shines."

Ralph watched him go down the terrace, then threw himself in a chair and tried to weigh Workley's advice.

Flight! It seemed the only thing to do. But to surrender everything—title, money, Mary— Ah, Mary! whom he was now free to marry! No; he would remain and fight it out!

But he wavered and hesitated two or three hours before he fell into a stupor of exhaustion and intoxication, and he even went so far as to try and calculate how much ready money he could lay his hands on; but the dawn creeping through the curtains found him lying in the chair with pallid face and twitching lips; and when the court assembled on the morrow he was in his former seat behind Lord Hatherley's chair, trying to face the curious, eager eyes of the crowd and the sympathy of his fellow-magistrates with a forced smile of confidence and serenity.

Ralph was a scoundrel of the worst type; but there was the Ratton blood in his veins; and, in that strange way in which blood shows itself, it was manifest in him now.

The crowd was, this day, a singularly quiet one. The intensity of the interests involved was too great to permit of any noise, and the jammed and packed mass stood shoulder to shoulder in perfect silence.

Even when Stella, accompanied by the Lisles, entered, it made no sound, and beyond a murmur, it gave no sign when Rath was brought in, and going to the front of the dock, looked round for Stella, smiled calmly, and waited as if he were the last person in the court to have cause for fear.

Almost as soon as the bench were seated, Mr. Bulpit rose.

"My lord," he said, "for reasons which will shortly appear, I retire from the case. Mr. Grahame will more worthily fill my place."

There was a start of surprise as the well-known barrister rose; for no one knew that Mr. Bulpit had wired for him and had been in consultation with him during a greater part of the night.

The famous counsel bowed to the bench.

"I have an application to make, your worships, and that is that the prisoner's name should be altered on the charge-sheet."

The words were spoken so calmly and quietly that for a moment no one caught their significance. Rath turned and glanced at the counsel, then looked from Stella to Edward, who, pale with excitement, nodded reassuringly, and the spectators held their breath.

Lord Hatherley was silent for a moment, then he said:

"What name do you wish to appear, Mr. Grahame?"

Mr. Grahame picked up an old leather portfolio from the desk before him and opened it, then he replied as calmly as before:

"Rath Percival, my lord—Rath Percival, Earl of Ratton."

(To be Continued.)

RIGID ECONOMY!

In a recent speech in London, Premier Asquith urged personal thrift throughout the nation so as to make it possible for the country to bear the strain of the expenditure entailed by the cost of War.

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We have Studio
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LATE

From the

Messages Received

Previous

OFFICIAL

The Governor, Newfoundland, LONDON.

The French Government fighting in Argonne commencing of July 3rd, containing very heavy losses, attack in close formation. Arras was dispersed with loss.

The Russian Government that a German battle Deutschland class was in submarine at the entrance Bay. A Russian destroyer met a German submarine man mine-layer Albatross tracked and run ashore on land coast.

On the land the Russian near Radom was successful in fighting the enemy. The Bug near the Gullia Lipa, the Russian now fallen back.

ARRIVED AT QUEENSTOWN

The British steamer Queenstown 10-day with dead on board, the remainder of the crew. Twelve men were killed, Californian, including and eight were injured, saved by the clever skipper, who manoeuvred out of reach of the shells until he was shot on the bridge. All were victims. They were landed town, most of them shot. The Anglo-Californian from Montreal with a crew of 23rd.

VICTIMS OF MINE-LAYERS

The German sailors on layer Albatross, killed by a British submarine on the island of Gotland, were day with signal honours. Swedish authorities participated. Revised number of killed and believed to be dying. The rest are doing well.

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The French steamer

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